

2014 CORPORATION COUNSEL ANNUAL REPORT



J. Blair Ward, Corporation Counsel
Christine L. Hansen, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Connie Freeberg, Paralegal II/County Board Reporter
Tom Antholine, Assistant Corporation Counsel (Child Support)
Vacant Position, Assistant Corporation Counsel (Child Support)

Significant Developments

Retirement of Corporation Counsel Philip C. Ristow
Retirement of Assistant Corporation Counsel E. Scott Scheibel
Hiring of new Corporation Counsel and Assistant Corporation Counsel

Services Provided and Responsibilities

The Corporation Counsel is the chief legal advisor to the County Board, the County Administrator, all County Board committees, commissions boards department heads and staff.

Primary areas of responsibility of the Corporation Counsel office:

- Attend all meetings of the County Board and render legal advice and opinions to the County Board, its committees, boards and commissions.
 - Prepared bid requirements and requests for proposals for publication in the County's official newspaper
 - Prepared and arranged publication of County Board minutes and annual minute books
 - Prepared resolutions, ordinances and reports as requested by County Board members, the County Administrator and department heads.
 - Prepared and/or reviewed all resolutions and ordinances going before the County Board
 - Drafted executive summaries included in the resolutions
- Issue legal opinions and provide advice to elected officials, County officers and employees concerning county operations.
 - Represented the Planning & Zoning Department in the enforcement of zoning and sanitation ordinances
 - Prosecuted multiple zoning and parks ordinance citations

- Prepared requests for proposals, drafted contracts for public works projects and for other services rendered to the County
- Reviewed and approved multiple contracts for the Fair Park in preparation for the annual county fair
- Reviewed contracts between the County and the State for the use and construction of salt/brine storage facilities
- Assist the County Administrator and Human Resources Department with union grievances, employee discipline and other personnel matters
- Handle claims and suits against the County, including assisting the County's liability insurance carriers in the defense of claims and lawsuits
- Collect delinquent taxes and foreclosure of real estate tax liens
 - Filed foreclosure actions on 23 tax delinquent properties in Jefferson County
- Prosecuted mental commitments and guardianship proceedings
 - 144 mental commitments
 - 44 extension of mental commitments
 - 33 guardianships and/or protective placements
- Provide legal services to the Child Support office as needed
- When authorized and directed by the County Administrator, act as Assistant County Administrator and provide direct supervision over certain county department heads; make necessary decisions in the County Administrator's absence
- Miscellaneous
 - Responded to Public Records Requests
 - Assist Planning & Zoning, Human Resources, Emergency Management and Land & Water Conservation Departments in the drafting revision or creation of various ordinances
 - Reviewed contracts for conservation easements
 - Negotiated with We Energies for a license agreement on behalf of the Parks Department allowing for construction of the Interurban Bike Trail